

R

154

L35T5

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

*Chap.* R 154

*Shelf* L35 T5

PRESENTED BY

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

















For the Library of Congress

THE LATE

CHARLES A. LEE, M. D.

OBITUARY NOTICE.

[REPRINTED FROM THE NEW YORK MEDICAL JOURNAL, APRIL, 1872.]

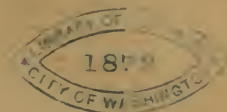
4 B 2

PROF. CHARLES ALFRED LEE, A. M., M. D., who died at his residence in Peekskill, N. Y., February 14, 1872, aged seventy-one, derived his blood from the Lees and Browns of Massachusetts and Connecticut. His ancestors in both branches extend back and occupy distinguished positions in America for more than two centuries. In collateral descent his paternal ancestors are allied to Governor Bradford's descendants. The earliest lineal paternal ancestors of Dr. Lee in America, that can be traced with certainty, are:

1. John Lee, who died in Massachusetts in 1690, and had for wife Mary Hart, of Farmington.

2. David Lee, of Coventry, son of the former, who married Lydia Strong, daughter of Jedediah Strong, and granddaughter of Elder John Strong.

3. Rev. Jonathan Lee, born July 4, 1718, who was a man of great force of character and influence, and the first Con-



gregational minister in Salisbury, and was twice married; first, to Elizabeth Metcalf, great-great-granddaughter of Governor Bradford, September 3, 1744; second, to Love Brinkerhoff, 1762; had eleven children, and died October 8, 1788.

4. Samuel Lee, Esq., of Salisbury, who married Elizabeth Brown, of Pittsfield, daughter of Captain Jacob Brown, of Sandisfield, an officer of the Revolutionary War, who accompanied Arnold in his fruitless expedition through the wilderness, up the Kennebec, against Canada, in 1776, and died in Quebec March 14, 1776; and niece of the gallant Colonel John Brown, who was killed in battle while fighting for American liberty, October 19, 1780, aged thirty-six.

Charles Alfred Lee, son of Samuel, was born at Salisbury, Conn., March 3, 1801. Much of his boyhood was passed in the family of his uncle, the late Elisha Lee, Esq., of Sheffield, Mass. Here he fitted for college, becoming a member of the Lenox Academy, at the age of sixteen. One year later he entered the sophomore class of Williams College, Mass. While at college he was noted for his great industry, systematic habits of study, strict performance of duties, and for irreproachable morals. On graduating at this institution A. M. in 1822, he received the honorable distinction of being chosen by the faculty to deliver the philosophical oration at the public college commencement. His studies had been prosecuted with a view to entering the Congregational ministry, but the state of his health on leaving college caused his medical advisers to urge him to study medicine, a vocation better calculated to improve his constitution, which had been seriously impaired by long confinement and close study, and from neglect of exercise and inattention to the laws of health.

Accordingly, he commenced the study of medicine with his brother-in-law, the late Luther Ticknor, M. D., of Salisbury, Conn. He attended two courses of lectures at the Berkshire Medical College, at Pittsfield, Mass., where he held the office of demonstrator of anatomy during the winter session, and instructor in botany during the summer course. After receiving the degree of M. D. at this institution, in 1825, he engaged for some time in practice with Drs. Ticknor and Asahel Humphrey, of his native town. In 1827 he

removed to the city of New York, where he continued his studies, and engaged actively in practice. In this great and growing city he encountered all the difficulties that usually lie in the path of young men in their efforts to acquire professional business and position. Being governed by correct morals, sound principles of action, with close attention to business, and indomitable perseverance, he was enabled in a short time to overcome all obstacles, and to take his place where his talents and education entitled him to be—in the front rank of the profession.

As a necessity from the organization of his mind, he was a profound thinker, and an enthusiastic, ceaseless worker, enlisting actively in any new measure of a public or professional character that promised in any way to be useful to the community or to elevate the profession of medicine, and ameliorate the condition of those requiring the aid of a physician.

When the Northern Dispensary of New York City was being established, Dr. Lee and Dr. James Stewart were among its most active and most efficient promoters, and to them is largely due the successful founding of this one of the most useful of the many public charitable institutions of the city. He faithfully discharged the duties of attending physician to this dispensary for over four years, during which time he prescribed for and attended more than four thousand patients annually. On resigning this position he received from the board of directors a unanimous vote of thanks for his very acceptable services, and was chosen chief physician, with the privilege of making all the subordinate appointments, supplying medicines, and exercising a general supervision over the establishment, under the board of managers. In a few years the extension of his private practice, which began to engross most of his time, induced him to resign this responsible office, when he was elected one of the consulting physicians, a position he held for many years.

On the 28th of June, 1828, Dr. Lee was united in marriage with Hester Ann Mildeberge, daughter of John A. and Ann (De Witt) Mildeberge, of New York City, by whom he had nine children, only three of whom, all sons, survived.

In 1832, during the first visit of Asiatic cholera, Dr.



Lee was appointed physician to Greenwich Cholera Hospital, and also attending-physician to the New York Orphan Asylum. In the latter institution he gave, in the form of lectures, specific instructions to the nurses on hygiene, ventilation, and the laws of health, and how to proceed in case any of the inmates were attacked; and, although there had been two deaths in the house the day preceding his taking charge, there was not another fatal case among more than one hundred children subsequently seized with the disease. He was indefatigable in his attention to his hospital duties, abandoning for the most part his private practice, sleeping and eating in the hospital, that his services might be prompt and efficient. During the epidemic, the doctor attended upon and prescribed for nearly one thousand cases of cholera.

From the time Dr. Lee commenced his professional career in the city of New York, up to 1845, he was most assiduously engaged in the practice of his profession, scarcely leaving the city for a single day. At this time, finding his health much impaired, and his nervous system particularly enfeebled from such close and laborious attention to his studies, and the routine duties of his profession, he accepted, by the advice of professional friends, an appointment to the chair of *Materia Medica* and General Pathology, in the Geneva Medical College, New York. The duties of this professorship required an absence of but eight weeks annually, which, however, gave him some relaxation, and proved beneficial to his health. The remainder of the year was devoted, as usual, to his practice in the city.

The liberality and independence of the doctor's principles were signally illustrated in 1846, while Dean of the faculty, in procuring the admission of Miss Elizabeth Blackwell as a regular student of medicine in the Geneva College. Her admission was after she had applied in vain to most of the medical schools in the principal cities, and when the doctor knew that his course would be likely to provoke criticism unfriendly to the Geneva College and himself.

After the year 1850, Dr. Lee devoted himself chiefly to teaching various branches of medicine in different medical colleges, among which may be named the University of the

City of New York; Geneva Medical College; University of Buffalo, medical department; Vermont Medical College, at Woodstock; Maine Medical School, at Brunswick; Berkshire Medical College; Starling Medical College, Columbus, Ohio. The branches taught by him in these different colleges were: Therapeutics and Materia Medica; General Pathology, Obstetrics, and Diseases of Females; Hygiene and Medical Jurisprudence.

In addition to the chairs actually filled, Dr. Lee was invited to fill the chair of Theory and Practice of Medicine in the University of the City of New York at the time it was made vacant by the resignation of Meredith Clymer, M. D. The same chair was tendered him in the University of Louisville, Ky., when it became vacant by the death of Daniel Drake, M. D. Existing professional engagements compelled him to decline both of these desirable positions. He also received applications to fill chairs in other colleges.

In 1850, Dr. Lee, in connection with his colleagues, Drs. Hamilton, Flint, Hadley, and Webster, founded the Buffalo Medical School, acting under the charter of the University of Buffalo. He continued to deliver his annual course in this institute until 1870-'71, when, at his own request, he was permitted to retire. The trustees at once elected him Emeritus Professor of Materia Medica and Hygiene, and at the same time passed unanimously a vote of thanks for his past valuable services to the university. He retained this position to the time of his death. Dr. Lee gave an annual course of lectures in the Maine Medical School for about fourteen years, and in the Geneva College for ten years. He was generally recognized as one of our best American teachers, thoroughly acquainted with the latest and soundest views upon all medical subjects, and never failing to interest his class. He never attempted any rhetorical display, generally reading from his copious notes.

After his college duties became so absorbing, he confined his practice chiefly to one of office consultations, and to consultations with other physicians. His consulting practice, too, was very large in the regions of the medical colleges in other States where he lectured, patients coming to him from long



distances. His experience and advice, too, were greatly sought after by medical practitioners. He was always a supporter of the ethics of the profession, and therefore popular with his brother practitioners, which did much to extend his consultation business.

Successful as Dr. Lee undoubtedly was as a teacher, it is by his pen that he has won his highest reputation. As an author and a medical writer, he is very widely and favorably known, both in this country and in Europe. He wrote extensively on a great variety of medical and scientific subjects. His "Physiology for the Use of Elementary Schools" was published by the American Common School Society about 1835. It was subsequently enlarged and published by J. Orville Taylor, of New York, and has passed through ten or more editions. This work answered very well the purpose for which it was written, has had a large sale, and has done much to popularize this important branch of knowledge with the people, and opened the way for its being taught in the common schools and seminaries of learning throughout our country. His "Manual of Geology, for Schools and Colleges," was published by the Harpers in 1835, as one of the volumes of the "Family Library." This had a very extensive sale throughout the United States and the Canadas, and has done much to create a taste for the study of this useful science. In 1843, Dr. Lee was instrumental in establishing the *New York Journal of Medicine and the Collateral Sciences*, a bi-monthly of one hundred and forty-four pages. Owing to the pressure of other engagements, the late Samuel Torrey, M. D., author of a valuable work on the climate of the United States, was engaged to edit the first few volumes. On the death of Dr. Torrey, Dr. Lee assumed the entire management, his name appearing on the title-page of the fourth volume. He continued the journal to the close of the tenth volume, his own pen furnishing much of the original material. It is not saying too much to state that this journal took a high rank in periodical literature, and contributed greatly to the respectability of American medical journalism.

In 1845, Dr. Lee brought out an edition of "Principles of Forensic Medicine," by William A. Guy, M. D., with extensive and valuable notes and additions, adding much to the

value of the book. In this labor he had the coöperation and advice of the late Chancellor James Kent.

In 1848, Dr. Lee commenced the most important and laborious professional work of his life—the editing an American edition of Dr. James Copland's "Dictionary of Practical Medicine," issued irregularly in London, in numbers comprising 144 pages of large octavo, double columns. Several attempts, one of which was in Washington, D. C., by Duff Green, had been made to issue an American reprint of this work, but, from one cause and another, all had failed. The editor, though apparently fully occupied with his medical journal, his practice, and his five or six annual courses of lectures in different colleges, undertook the Herculean task of supplying, in the way of notes and additions, all of permanent value to be found in medical journals, monographs, formal treatises, and even manuscript lectures, a task which involved the necessity of supplying himself with complete lists of the American medical periodicals, and the careful search of all known works of native origin relating to the different subjects discussed. The completeness of the American Medical Bibliography, at the end of each article, shows the vast amount of careful and discriminating labor and research expended in this department of the work. This was at the time the heaviest and most expensive medical publication ever undertaken in the United States, and will ever remain, with the extensive notes, a grand and lasting memorial of the indefatigable industry and research of the editor. It was the wonderful completeness and time-saving value of this list that first suggested to the author of this sketch the advantages to the medical man of a comprehensive subject-index to the medical literature of our various American medical journals, a work that is now well in hand. The Dictionary was fifteen years in passing through the press of the Harpers, owing to its slow publication by its author in London. The entire work forms three immense octavo volumes. It is not an exaggeration to say that this forms the most complete and valuable work on the theory and practice of medicine, including etiology, pathology, and therapeutics, ever issued from the English or the American press. Dr. Lee received the hearty thanks of Dr. Copland himself for

the able and satisfactory manner in which he had given the American edition to the public.

During the progress of this great work, Dr. Lee brought out other valuable publications, among which was an edition of a learned and practical treatise on "Food and Diet," by Jonathan Pereira, M. D. This enterprise was undertaken at the request of the distinguished author, from whom the American editor received kind acknowledgments and thanks. Besides the extensive notes, over seventy pages of original matter was added by way of appendix. As a matter of justice, it should be stated that the entire profits of the numerous American editions of the work have been generously assigned by the editor to the author and his heirs.

In 1840, Dr. Lee issued, with many valuable notes and an appendix of seventy pages of original matter, an American edition of an English work, entitled "Bacchus, an Essay on the Nature, Cause, Effects, and Cure of Intemperance," by Ralph B. Grindrod. The additions by the American editor were subsequently, in 1851, incorporated in the English edition of the work. The American profits of this work were also relinquished by Dr. Lee to the British author.

In 1843 he edited and published an edition of A. T. Thomson's "Conspectus" of the London, Edinburgh, and Dublin Colleges, and of the United States Pharmacopœia. To this work he also added many valuable articles and extensive notes.

In 1844, he supervised and revised an edition of the "Pharmacologia, or, the Theory and Art of Prescribing," by J. A. Paris, M. D., which was published by the Harpers.

About twenty-six or twenty-seven years ago, Dr. Lee wrote for the *New York Churchman*, at the request of the editor, a series of essays entitled "Medica Sacra," which were published in its weekly columns. They attracted much attention.

Besides the works already mentioned and printed, the doctor prepared, during the last years of his life, a work on the "Indigenous Materia Medica of the United States," which is in manuscript, and would form a volume of about six hundred pages, and would be a valuable contribution



to this department of medicine. In addition to those noticed, a number of other useful volumes were written or edited by the subject of this memoir. He was a constant and voluminous contributor to various scientific, literary, and professional journals, at home and abroad, for more than forty years. His writings on hygiene, the laws of health, temperance, and the influence of alcohol—i. e., liquors—on the human body, were commenced in the year 1828, and continued through various channels to the time of his death.

Dr. Lee was one of the first to detect and call attention to the extensive and dangerous adulteration of malt-liquors in the United States, which, by careful analysis, he demonstrated, in 1834, from ten different samples of Albany ale.

His wide-spread reputation as a forcible writer upon the subject of temperance induced the British Temperance Reform League to invite Dr. Lee, while in England, in 1862, to deliver an address before them at their annual meeting in Exeter Hall, London. His remarks on the occasion gave great satisfaction, and he received a unanimous vote of thanks.

Dr. Lee first visited Europe in 1848, for the purpose of recruiting his health, which had become greatly impaired by his close and severe labors. During this visit he became acquainted with many of the distinguished and leading medical and scientific men of Great Britain and the Continent. He visited all the most noted hospitals and public institutions. He took a special interest in studying the management of institutions for the insane, and wrote a series of papers on this subject, of decided ability, which did much to inform the profession of our country of the improvements introduced into hospitals for the insane. An absence of nine months, with the agreeable society he met, and the tonic of travel, entirely restored him to health, and on his return he at once renewed the routine of his usual duties as teacher, editor, author, and practitioner.

The character of Dr. Lee's mind, and the range of studies that engaged his attention, entitle him to be ranked with a class of medical men, never numerous in any country, such as Rush, Mitchell, Hosack, Francis, Drake, etc. His thoughts took a philosophic range of great scope, manifesting some

preference for the natural and exact sciences. This quality of his mind, with his thorough and comprehensive studies, led him to be selected and esteemed as one of the most important medical experts in our country. He was a man of genial disposition, elegant manners, and was affable and courteous to all. He was thoroughly unselfish, and ready at all times to help others; and was particularly the friend and supporter of young men entering the profession. His sympathies were active and humanitarian in their turn, and often brought him before the public.

In the spring of 1862, the second year of the war, Dr. Lee visited Europe to collect plans, models, and specifications of the best and most recent naval, civil, and military hospitals of Great Britain and the Continent, for the use of the United States Government. In the prosecution of this philanthropic enterprise he was eminently successful. The heads of the War and Navy Departments of Great Britain, with much consideration and promptitude, placed at his disposal accurate maps and drawings, with working plans and specifications of the most approved naval and military hospitals of the kingdom. These, with others, were placed in the archives of the War Department at Washington, and served, no doubt, as valuable models for the erection of similar establishments during the progress of the war. During the same year, while on an extended tour through England, France, Germany, Switzerland, Prussia, Austria, and Italy, he wrote for the *American Medical Times*, of New York, about fifty elaborate and carefully-prepared letters, designed to furnish useful and important facts and information to our army and naval surgeons, as well as to practitioners generally, in regard to military and naval hygiene hospitals, and hospital hygiene, bringing prominently forward the medical and surgical treatment of patients in the various public charitable institutions of the different countries, and their special arrangements and management. Before leaving England on this tour, Dr. Lee was elected a member of the "British Social Science Congress," then holding its annual session in London, with Lord Brougham as its president. The doctor was unanimously called to preside over the section of the health department of that useful association.



In consequence of the protracted and severe military struggle in which his native country was then unhappily involved, Dr. Lee was induced, late in the fall of 1862, while at Naples, on his way to Egypt and the East, to turn his steps homeward. He reached New York early in 1863, and immediately offered his services to the Government, in the capacity of a surgeon. He was accepted and assigned to duty in a hospital, but, very properly believing that he could be more useful in a wider field than he enjoyed in the subordinate position which had been allotted him, he soon resigned, and accepted a situation as hospital inspector and visitor, in the United States Sanitary Commission's employ. He labored efficiently in this field until the close of the war.

In the spring of 1865, soon after the surrender of General Lee's army, the doctor was engaged for several months throughout the South in collecting materials for "Memoirs of a Sanitary History of the War," particularly as relating to the Confederate armies, with hospital statistics, army diseases, etc., in which he was remarkably successful. A portion of these valuable papers will be found in the "Sanitary Records and Medical History of the War," issued by the United States Sanitary Commission.

In 1850 Dr. Lee purchased a handsome residence in the neighborhood of the Highlands near Peekskill, on the Hudson. He loved domestic retirement and quiet study; and there, with his library and his family around him, he passed much of his time in study and writing, and in the enjoyment of quietude during the closing years of his life.

For the last ten years he has taken a very active interest in some of the great humanitarian movements, especially in instituting and encouraging reform in the management and care of the chronic insane of the United States. As a large majority of this unfortunate class are quiet and harmless, and able to perform considerable bodily labor, he was opposed to shutting them up in close and crowded wards and cells, but favored their distribution under the care of suitable attendants and keepers, in simple, cheap, and comfortable cottages, after the French system, where they may enjoy open-air life, and a degree of domestic comfort, with sufficient daily exercise to

preserve health. These views he has advocated at considerable length in the form of two able reports, one made to the New York State Medical Society, and published in their Transactions for the year 1865; the other as chairman of a committee appointed by the American Medical Association, and contained in their Transactions for 1868.

Dr. Lee was a member of the New York Academy of Medicine, the New York State Medical Society, the American Medical Association, the New York Historical Society, the New York Lyceum of Natural History, etc., and honorary member of the Connecticut State Medical Society, the Ohio State Medical Society, and a long list of other learned and scientific bodies, both at home and abroad.

In 1835, he became a member of the Episcopal Church, with which he retained a consistent Christian connection to the time of his death. He was warden of St. Peter's Church at Peekskill for many years, always taking an active interest in its affairs. For a layman he was remarkably well versed in theology, and liberal in his views of religion. Dr. Martyn Payne writes: "I had enjoyed an intimate acquaintance with Dr. Lee for more than forty years, and had the highest esteem for him as a man of the most lofty virtues, and profound religious convictions. His writings attest the comprehensive nature of his scientific and literary acquirements, as well as a vigorous and logical mind."

Dr. Lee was taken ill on the 30th of January, with endocarditis, and after two weeks of suffering died, with calmness and Christian hope. His wife and three sons survive him, and were with him during his sickness. His remains have been interred in "Sleepy Hollow Cemetery," at Tarrytown, N. Y.  
—J. M. TONER, M. D.





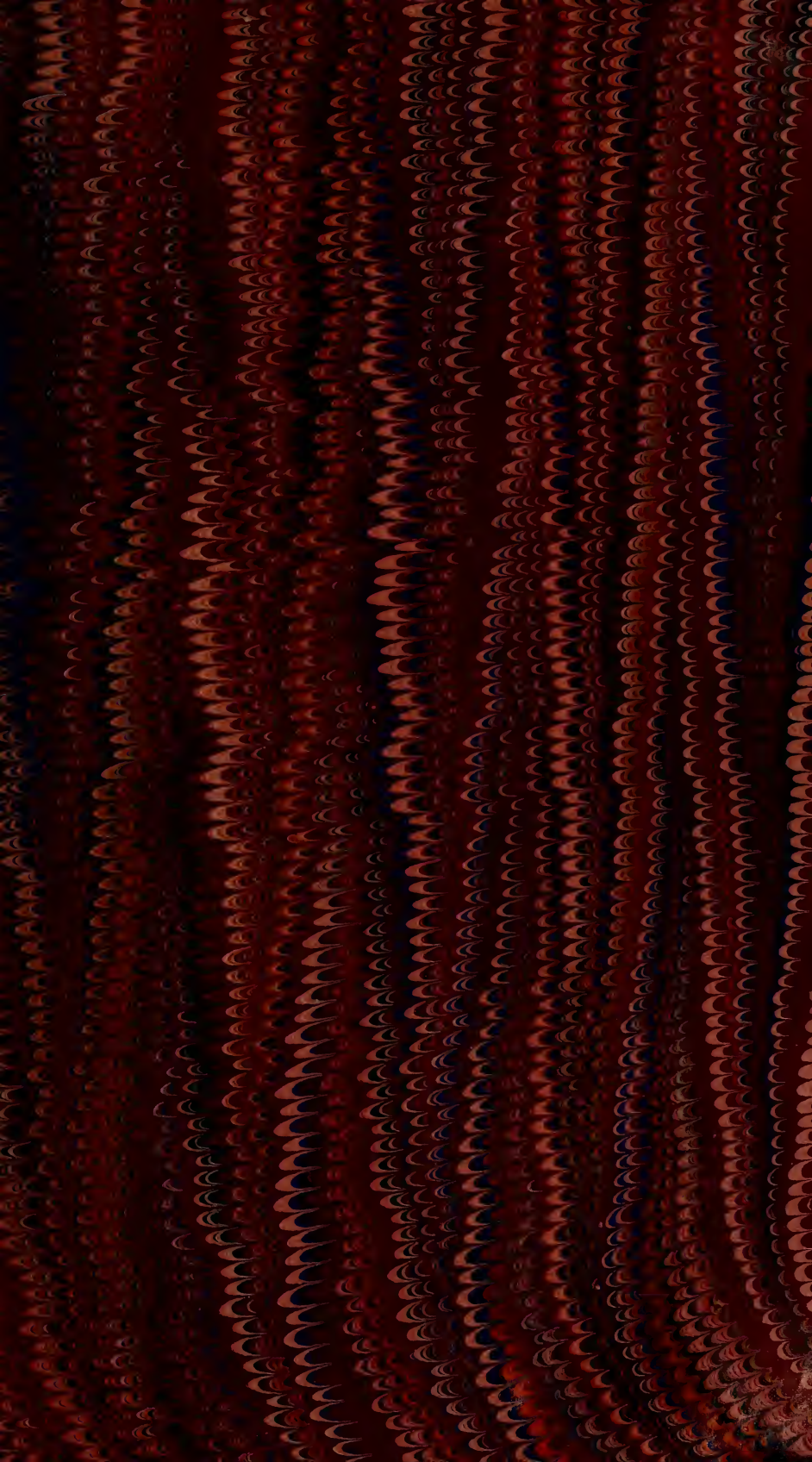














LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 021 062 178 7